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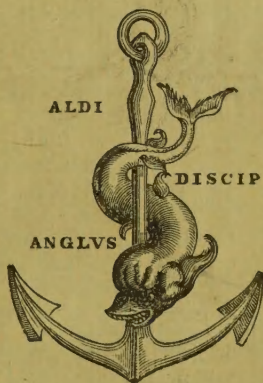
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*Mr. Wain*

FEW COMMENTS ON DR. PUSEY'S  
LETTER TO THE BISHOP  
OF LONDON.

BY WILLIAM DODSWORTH, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "A LETTER TO DR. PUSEY, ON THE  
POSITION WHICH HE HAS TAKEN IN  
THE PRESENT CRISIS."



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1851.

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SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
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## A FEW COMMENTS ON DR. PUSEY'S LETTER.

DR. PUSEY has a peculiar style of writing: some may consider it an excellence, others a defect. On almost every subject which he takes in hand, he seems to aim at saying every thing that can be said upon it. While this gives great fulness and variety to his writings, it has this disadvantage, that the particular points of his subject are so overloaded with partially irrelevant matter, that it is often difficult to disentangle them from the mass of words with which they are encumbered. This is strikingly the case in his recent Letter to the Bishop of London, in explanation of some statements contained in a letter of mine to him, published eight months ago.

The simple object of my Letter to Dr. Pusey was, to hold him to a consistent course of conduct. He had been amongst the foremost to promote in the church of England those doctrines and practices which, whether rightly or wrongly, are by the generality of persons identified with the Church of Rome. It seemed then to me inconsistent in him, in the time of danger to the Anglican Church, to shrink from a strong and bold assertion of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration,—a doctrine admitted to lie at the very foundation of all Catholic teaching. In order to show this inconsistency, it was needful for me to

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enumerate the doctrines to which I referred, as I did in the following words :—

“ Both by precept and example, you have been amongst the most earnest to maintain Catholic principles. By your constant and common practice of administering the sacrament of penance ; by encouraging everywhere, if not enjoining, auricular confession, and giving special priestly absolution ; by teaching the propitiatory sacrifice of the holy eucharist, as applicatory of the one sacrifice of the cross, and by adoration of Christ really present on the altar under the form of bread and wine ; by your introduction of Roman Catholic books ‘adapted to the use of our church ;’ by encouraging the use of rosaries and crucifixes, and special devotions to our Lord, as e. g. to His five wounds ; by adopting language most powerfully expressive of our incorporation into Christ, as e. g. ‘our being inebriated by the blood of our Lord ;’ by advocating counsels of perfection, and seeking to restore with more or less fulness the conventual or monastic life ;—I say, by the teaching and practice of which this enumeration is a sufficient type and indication, you have done much to revive amongst us the system which may be pre-eminently called SACRAMENTAL. And yet, now, when by God’s mercy to us, a great opportunity has occurred, of asserting and enforcing the very keystone of this system, and apart from which the whole must crumble away,—forgive me for speaking so plainly,—you seem to shrink from the front rank,” &c.

In explanation of the above brief enumeration of doctrines, as held by himself, Dr. Pusey has written an octavo volume of above 250 pages. In the course

of this essay he seems to me to have admitted, with very slight exception, the accuracy of my statement; insomuch that my first impression was, that any comment or rejoinder on my part would be quite unnecessary. But I find that in some quarters the very multitude of Dr. Pusey's words seems to have drawn away attention from THE FACTS which he admits; and one of his own friends, apparently in his particular confidence, has publicly charged my statement with being "highly coloured, and unfair."\* Hence it seems that I am called upon publicly to state the grounds upon which I put forth that statement; and to show, in as few words as I can, how far Dr. Pusey has admitted its correctness.

I. I stated,—“By your constant and common practice of administering the sacrament of penance, by encouraging everywhere, if not enjoining, auricular confession, and giving priestly absolution;”

When I stated this, I knew, what was also known to hundreds of other persons, that clergymen of the established church, (I myself was one,) were in the habit of doing what is here described; that is, of receiving confessions, both from men and women, of their whole lives, in details as minute as any that can possibly be made to a Catholic priest; of enjoining penance, and giving priestly absolution. Dr. Pusey, (I mention it to his honour), was one of the foremost to commend the restoration of this salutary practice, both by precept and example. He was the first Anglican clergyman who spoke

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\* See a Letter of Rev. Charles Marriot, in “The Guardian,” Jan. 22, 1851.



to me of its revival in the established church, and I know of many persons whom he has led into the practice. With regard to what English protestants most object to,—the minute detail of sins in confession,—it is only right to say, so far as I know, that confession is required to be at least quite as minute, where observed in the established church, as it is in the Catholic church.

Again, Dr. Pusey and I had been associated together in the establishment of a sisterhood of mercy; and it was certainly an implied and understood thing, though not absolutely enforced, that the sisters should use confession; as they all, in fact, do. I believe that both he and I should have *suggested*, at least, confession to any applicant for admission, as likely to contribute to her spiritual welfare and comfort in the sisterhood.

Dr. Pusey fully admits that he has thus received confessions; that he is in the habit of receiving them in four dioceses, three besides the diocese in which he lives.\* He only denies that he has anywhere “enjoined” the practice. It will be observed that I have only used the word “enjoin” in a qualified sense. I said, “by encouraging everywhere, *if not enjoining*,” &c. Of course I accept Dr. Pusey’s denial, and withdraw the word: but I believe the difference between us here will be found a matter of opinion, rather than of fact. I might be of opinion that a course of advice amounts in effect to the “enjoining” of the practice, which he thinks no more than an “encouragement” to it.

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\* Postscript of a Letter to Mr. Richards, p. 263.



Dr. Pusey admits that he administers penance "*as a sacrament.*"\* He only denies what I did not impute to him, that he holds it to be "such a sacrament" as baptism and the holy eucharist. No one could suppose that I meant to charge him with an explicit contradiction, in terms, of one of the articles of the Anglican church. Dr. Pusey says, "I believe that [absolution], being a means of grace with an outward visible sign, does, according to the teaching of our church, in a secondary sense, come under the title of sacrament."†

II. I stated, "by teaching the propitiatory sacrifice of the holy eucharist, as applicatory of the one sacrifice of the cross."

This Dr. Pusey fully admits. He says,‡ "Who-soever believeth that there is an oblation to God in the holy eucharist, [which he himself believes] by which, pleading the death of Christ before the Father, we obtain favour from Him, believes a 'propitiatory' action in the only sense in which it is believed at all, which is to 'render God propitious.'" He only argues against the error, falsely imputed to Catholics, that they separate the sacrifice of the eucharist from the one sacrifice of the cross. In repudiating this error, every Catholic would agree with him. Here I must observe, what I think Dr. Pusey in all fairness ought to have more pointedly mentioned, that I have specially guarded against any such erroneous inference, by introducing the words "as applicatory

\* Letter to the Bp. of London, pp. 5, 22.

† Ibid. p. 22.

‡ Ibid. p. 49.

*Absolution may be in a qualified sense*

of the one sacrifice of the cross ;” and that hence, on this point, *there is no difference between us.*

III. I have stated, “ and by adoration of Christ really present on the altar under the form of bread and wine.”

This also Dr. Pusey has admitted.\* In one of his adapted books he tells us that he has “ retained the words, ‘ Adore Him with profound reverence,’ ” in reference to His presence in the holy eucharist. He only repudiates what I never imputed to him, and what Catholics would deny with an energy equal to his own, that there is any “ physical, carnal presence of Christ’s natural flesh and blood.”

I suppose that the generality of Anglicans kneel “ at the administration of the Lord’s Supper,” for the reason which their own communion office assigns, (apparently rejecting any other reason) namely, “ for a signification of our humble and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of Christ given to all worthy receivers, and for the avoiding of such profanation and disorder in the holy communion as might otherwise ensue.”† My words were intended to express that Dr. Pusey and other high-churchmen (of course at that time including myself) kneel, not for this reason *chiefly*, but in adoration of our Lord really present under the form of bread and wine. This then is fully admitted by Dr. Pusey.

IV. I have stated, “ by your introduction of Roman Catholic books ‘ adapted to the use of our church.’ ”

\* Letter to the Bp. of London, p. 72.

† Rubrick at the end of the English communion office.

This of course is fully admitted, and requires no comment from me.

V. I have stated, "by encouraging the use of rosaries and crucifixes."

In reference to the use of rosaries, I must profess myself unable to understand what Dr. Pusey has written in the following words :\* "In the book itself (the *Paradisus*) it was plain what was meant by a Rosary ; until this unexplained allusion to it in Mr. Dodsworth's letter, no one misunderstood it. As for the use of the string of beads called a Rosary, these devotions could not be used with them. They need no such external help, and do not even admit it."

And afterwards he asks in a tone of triumph — (a tone which I am happy to say does not generally characterize his letter) "And now, my Lord, I might venture to ask any one who has read or repeated this statement about me, whether they imagined that this was all which was meant by the use of "rosaries" — forms of devotion addressed to the Holy Trinity, or to our Lord, pleading to Him His own Life and Sufferings and Death ; that He should have mercy upon us, and forgive us our sins, or give us His graces."†

From these words any one I think would understand that although Dr. Pusey's translation of the *Paradisus* retained the *name* of Rosary, it did not recommend, nay, nor even admit "the use of the string of beads called a Rosary." Yet Dr. Pusey

\* P. 138.

† Letter to the Bp. of London, p. 143.



cannot really mean this, for I quote the following words from his translation, p. 56.

*“ Then the Rosary is said in three divisions of Ten. At the beginning of each ten, or at the THREE LARGER BEADS of the Rosary, the Lord’s Prayer is said, &c. At each of THE SMALLER BEADS read the words of the Seraphic Trishagion. Is. 6. and of the Ecclesiastical doxology,” &c.*

Whether this passage justifies what I have written, I must leave others to judge. Dr. Pusey puts forth “ an adapted ” book of devotion ; and by that very adaptation sanctions every thing that is in it. This book directs the use of “ the string of beads called a Rosary.” This seems to me plainly to encourage “ the use of a Rosary,” not in one modified meaning, but in its other and usual meaning.

But besides this Dr. Pusey says, p. 138, “ As to the actual ‘ Rosary ’ I may have been asked by some five or six persons, *who had them*, whether there was any harm in using them?” and then he indirectly admits that he had so far sanctioned them. I may here mention that one such instance had come to my knowledge before I wrote that letter.

In reference to the use of crucifixes Dr. Pusey fully admits that he has recommended them.\* I do not think that I need detain the reader by any remark upon his distinction between “ a crucifix ” and “ the representation of Christ crucified.†

\* P. 144.

† I very reluctantly notice the following painful passage in Dr. Pusey’s remarks on this branch of the subject. The italics are mine. “ *I could not, when asked, but say* (as I said in the note

VI. I have stated, "and special devotions to our Lord as e. g. to His Five Wounds."

This Dr. Pusey has fully admitted.\* I referred especially to his translation of the Paradisus, where such devotions are recommended, and given at length.

VII. I have stated, "by adopting language most powerfully expressive of our incorporation into Christ as e. g. "our being inebriated by the Blood of our Lord." Dr. Pusey admits this also, and explains it at great length.† I referred to a book of devotions sanctioned, if not compiled, by Dr. Pusey, in which occurs this prayer,

"Blood of Christ, inebriate me."

and again,

"Let Thy Wounds be to me meat and drink, whereby I may be fed, inebriated and delighted."

above quoted, and as *Dr. Arnold said*,) that the Crucifix itself was *not forbidden* by the Second Commandment." p. 146. Dr. Pusey argues at great length, and with much force and beauty upon the edifying use of the crucifix—as reminding us of Him Who died for us; as reminding us of Him "by its very touch," and he says much more in this good strain; he knows too how falsely catholics are accused of breaking the second commandment by its use. And yet he speaks as if reluctantly, "*I could not refuse*."—"when asked," and as being able to shelter himself behind the opinions of a most estimable man indeed, but an avowed latitudinarian. Thus fortified he could not refuse to say that christians who use the crucifix are not actually IDOLATERS! What must we think of a position which forces such a man as Dr. Pusey to write in this strain? Afterwards at p. 149 he says, "It cannot but be natural to every christian heart, to love to behold representations of his Crucified Lord. *It cannot, dare not need apology*." Would that he had thought of this before he wrote the previous painfully apologetic passage.

\* P. 150, &c.

† Ibid. pp. 193, &c.

And I had reason to know how strongly this form of devotion had been insisted upon by those under Dr. Pusey's spiritual guidance.

In the same Devotions, given as I know to some who are under Dr. Pusey's spiritual guidance, the following beautiful passages occur :

"We pray Thee also, O Holy Father, for the souls of the faithful departed, especially, — that this great Sacrifice of Thy love may be to them health and Salvation, joy and refreshment. O Lord, my God, grant them [the faithful departed] *this day* a great and abundant feast of Thee the living Bread, Who camest down from heaven, and givest life unto the world ; even of that Flesh which was taken of the blessed Virgin Mary, and conceived by the Holy Ghost," &c. p. 12.

"O most sweet Bread, heal the palate of my heart . . . . Holy Bread, Living Bread, Pure Bread, Who camest down from Heaven, and givest life to the world, come into my heart," &c. p. 14.

VIII. Finally. I have stated, "By advocating counsels of perfection, and seeking to restore with more or less fulness the conventual or monastic life."

Certainly it was the last thing I should have expected, to hear that this statement was disputed. It is notorious enough that Dr. Pusey has been amongst the foremost, again I speak it to his honour, not only to establish sisterhoods in the Anglican church, but also to give them that character which is sufficiently described by the words "conventual and monastic." I mean the making abstraction from the world, perpetual devotions, and the interior life, the basis of such institutions. It is well known that the sister-



hood in my late parish, and in which Dr. Pusey was much concerned, was of this description. While no vows were exacted, we certainly made it no secret that we expected those who entered the institution to devote themselves to its objects *for life*; while the evangelical counsels of "voluntary poverty," "chastity," and "obedience" were enjoined in their rules. I must leave others to judge, then, whether I have been guilty of misrepresentation.

In conclusion, I wish *emphatically* to repeat, what I have more than once said in the course of these few observations, that I made this statement originally, and I still adhere to it, not as, in its leading features, disparaging to Dr. Pusey, but as to his honour. What seemed to me to disparage him was that he did not act up to the principles involved in it. I may say indeed that I never could agree with him in the propriety of publishing his "adapted" books. Besides other objections, I do not think it fair to the writers of those books (still alive to the church, though dead to the world) to mutilate them *for such a purpose*. Neither could I ever feel it my duty, whether rightly or wrongly, *as a clergyman of the established church*, to sanction the use of rosaries, nor devotions to the five blessed Wounds; nor, in a word, to adopt any language which seemed alien to the tone and spirit of the Prayer Book. I may be excused for saying here, that although, in these times of misunderstanding and misrepresentation, I have been held up as one who was devoted to outward forms, I have never laid much stress upon them, either in reference to words or acts. I have been anxious that the reality should precede, and give

birth to, the form; and have never expected to produce the reality through the form. Those who know me best will bear witness that this has been so. The Real Presence was heretofore believed by me to be the doctrine of the established church, and therefore I surrounded the altar with all the honour and reverence which I could give to it. I hoped also that the established church acknowledged a sacrifice on the altar, therefore I ministered as a priest before it. But I never imitated Rome, nor adopted a language or phraseology peculiar to Rome. I say thus much, because it may serve to dispel a misapprehension which I have found to exist in reference to this much-canvassed passage in my letter. While some have thought that I intended to *accuse* Dr. Pusey, others have thought that I meant to express approbation of *all* that I stated respecting his doctrine and practice. I meant neither the one nor the other. I was simply stating FACTS—FACTS which seemed to me important to be known at that crisis;—feeling as I then did that any retrograde movement, any flinching from the principles which high-churchmen had so long maintained, would be FATAL, as I firmly believe it has proved, to any measure for establishing the pretensions of the church of England to be accounted CATHOLIC.

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#### NOTE.

It ought not to be lost sight of by those who so violently object to my Letter to Dr. Pusey, that *very soon after that letter*, I will not say in consequence of it, Dr. Pusey changed his opinion respecting the necessity of a strong assertion of the doctrine of Baptismal regeneration. My letter was published in the end of May. Previous to that time Dr. Pusey had urgently contended, in spite of very strong remonstrances, that it would be a sufficient remedy against the evil of the Gorham judgment, if we could obtain from the Bishops a re-assertion of the truth, "original sin is remitted to all infants in and by baptism. In a letter to the "Guardian" in June, I think, which I cannot immediately refer to, he wrote to the effect that the time was now come when nothing short of a full statement on the doctrine of baptism would suffice. Had Dr. Pusey used this language from the first, a different result *might* have followed from the united efforts of high churchmen. As it was, happily, as I must now think it, Dr. Pusey's retraction or change of opinion came too late to be of any effect.



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